

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

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FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 801

S E C R E T BANGKOK 20018

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MMOL, MILI, PFOR, TH, US

SUBJ: U.S. RESIDUAL ACTIVITIES IN THAILAND: JOINT PRESS
STATEMENT

REF: A) BANGKOK 19778 B) STATE 173896

1. MFA PRESENTED COUNTERDRAFT OF JOINT PRESS STATEMENT TO
EMBOFFS JULY 15. IT REPRESENTS A SOMEWHAT SHORTENED VERSION
OF OUR PROPOSAL (REF A), AS REVISED (REF B), TEXT AS FOLLOWS:

BEGIN TEXT

THE MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THAILAND, MR. BHICHAIRATTAKUL, AND THE AMERICAN AMBASSADOR M4. CHARLES S. WHITEHOUSE, MET ON JULY 16, 1976, TO REVIEW THE QUESTION OF UNITED STATES MILITARY WITHDRAWALS FROM THAILAND. THE AMBASSADOR INFORMED THE MINISTER THAT THE RADIO RESEARCH FACILITY AT RAMASUN WAS CLOSED ON JUNE 20 THAT THE DEEPWATER PORT AT SATTAHIP WAS TURNED OVER ENTIRELY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF THAILAND ON JULY 15 AND THAT THE MACTHAI HEADQUARTERS WILL BE CLOSED ON JULY 20, THUS COMPLETING THE WITHDRAWAL SCHEDULE MUTUALLY AGREED BY BOTH GOVERNMENTS. AFTER JULY 20, 1976, THEREFORE, THE ONLY U.S. MILITARY PERSONNEL REMAINING IN THAILAND, OTHER THAN THOSE

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ATTACHED TO THE EMBASSY, THE SEATO MEDICAL RESEARCH

LABORATORY, WILL CONSIST OF MEMBERS OF THE JOINT UNITED STATES MILITARY ADVISORY GROUP WHOSE NUMBER TODAY IS 263. THEY WERE PLEASED TO NOTE THAT THE SEATO MEDICAL RESEARCH LABORATORY WOULD BE RETAINED AND THAT ITS HUMANITARIAN WORK PROGRAMS ON TROPICAL DISEASES WOULD THUS BE CONTINUED.

THE MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND THE AMBASSADOR CONFIRMED THE UNDERSTANDINGS REACHED BETWEEN THEM IN PREVIOUS NEGOTIATIONS AND ON THE BASIS OF THOSE UNDERSTANDINGS THEY REVIEWED THE PROGRESS OF THE TECHNICAL LEVEL DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN THE TWO GOVERNMENTS REGARDING THE TURNOVER OF CERTAIN ITEMS OF EQUIPMENT TO THE GOVERNMENT OF THAILAND. THEY NOTED THAT THE DISCUSSIONS ARE WELL UNDERWAY REGARDING ARRANGEMENTS UNDER WHICH THE EQUIPMENT USED AT PRESENT IN THE INTEGRATED COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEM (ICS) WOULD BE TURNED OVER AND MADE AVAILABLE TO THE GOVERNMENT OF THAILAND, AND THAT SUBSTANTIAL PROGRESS HAS ALSO BEEN MADE TOWARDS AN AGREEMENT UNDER WHICH THE APPROXIMATELY 15,000 SHORT TONS OF AMMUNITION IN THAILAND (AIT) WOULD BE RETAINED IN THAILAND WITH A VIEW TO ITS SUBSEQUENT PURCHASE BY THE GOVERNMENT OF THAILAND.

THEY NOTED ALSO THAT DISCUSSIONS ARE WELL ADVANCED ON ARRANGEMENTS WHICH WOULD ENABEL THAI TECHNICIANS TO OPERATE THE SEISMIC RESEARCH STATION AT CHIANG MAI. TECHNICAL DISCUSSIONS HAVE ALSO COVERED PERMISSION TO BE GRANTED FOR UNITED STATES PLANES IN TRANSIT TO UTILIZE THE ROYAL THAI AIR FORCE BASE AT TAKHLI FOR REFUELING AND EMERGENCY REPAIRS, AS WELL AS ARRANGMENT FOR THE TURN-OVER TO THE GOVERNMENT OF THAILAND OF A NUMBER OF ITEMS OF RADIO RESEARCH EQUIPMENT ORIGINALLY OPERATING AT

AMASUN.

THE MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND THE AMBASSADOR WERE PLEASED TO NOTE THAT TALKS ON THESE MATTERS WERE PROCEEDING RAPIDLY AND IN A COOPERATIVE SPIRIT. TECHNICAL LEVEL ARRANGEMENTS RELATING TO ALL THE MATTERS UNDER
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DISCUSSION AND CONSISTENT WITH THE ABOVE-MENTIONED UNDERSTANDINGS REMAIN SUBJECT TO FINAL APPROVAL BY THE TWO GOVERNMENTS. COMPLETION OF SUCH ARRANGEMENTS IS EXPECTED WITHIN THE NEAR FUTURE. END TEXT

2. EMBASSY HAS NO SIGNIFICANT PROBLEMS WITH THAI VERSION EXCEPT THAT IT ELIMINATES SPECIFICS ON SOME OF THE ISSUES. RTG POINT IS THAT BY DEVOTING SO MUCH ATTENTION TO AIT

AND ICS AND SO LITTLE ATTENTION TO TAKHLI IN ORIGINAL PROPOSAL, IMBALANCE WILL RAISE QUESTIONS ON LATTER ISSUE, ON WHICH RTG WOULD LIKE TO MINIMIZE ATTENTION. MFA OFFICIALS CLAIMED THAT THEY WANT TO TRY TO AVOID SPELLING OUT IN THIS STATEMENT OO MUCH OF WHAT IS UNDER DISCUSSION ON TECHNICAL LEVEL.

3. WITH RESPECT TO PARAGRAPH THREE OF THAI TEXT, EMBASSY HAS SUGGESTED DELETING LAST FOUR WORDS "ORIGINALLY OPERATING AT RAMASUN". MFA ADVISES THAT RTG WOULD LIKE TO RETAIN PHRASE BUT IF WE INSIST ON ITS DELETION, RTG WILL RELUCTANTLY AGREE. (FYI. REFERENCE TO RAMASUN CLOSING DATE WAS INSERTED AT BEGINNING OF STATEMENT BY FOREIGN MINISTER PHICHAH HIMSELF FOR INTERNAL POLITICAL REASONS.)

4. MFA WISHES TO RELEASE STATEMENT ON JULY 16. EMBASSY HAS ADVISED THAT IT MUST OBTAIN PRIOR CLEARANCE FROM WASHINGTON, AMBASSADOR WILL MEET WITH FOREIGN MINISTER AFTER DEPARTMENT'S REPLY RECEIVED. MFA HOPES THAT, EVEN IF THERE IS TIME SLIPPAGE, STATEMENT CAN BE RELEASED DURING THE DAY. REQUEST IMMEDIATE REPLY.
WHITEHOUSE

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